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Edison-Miller Family Records

Family Records Series, Part III

[FP001-F] Miller, Mary E. (1889)

Family Records Series -- Correspondence

Title
[FP001-F] Miller, Mary E. (1889)

Description
This folder contains letters from Mary Emily Miller (1869-1946) to her older sister, Mina Miller Edison. The four selected letters were written during the period June-December 1889, while Mary was in Europe with her sisters Jennie and Grace. The letters contain comments about the strained relations between the Miller sisters and Mina's stepdaughter Marion Edison, who was touring Europe with them. There are also remarks about Marion's attraction to a Mr. Verity who lived in London (probably George Herbert Verity, who met Thomas Edison during a trip to the United States in 1887). Despite the opposition of her aunt, Marion visited the Verity family in July.

Additional letters by Mary E. Miller can be found in the Charles Edison Fund Collection and the David E. E. Sloane Collection. Some of the letters in the CEF Collection, scanned from the microfilm, are now in the possession of the Thomas Edison National Historical Park.

URL

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Identifier

FP001-F

Type

Family Records

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Is Part Of

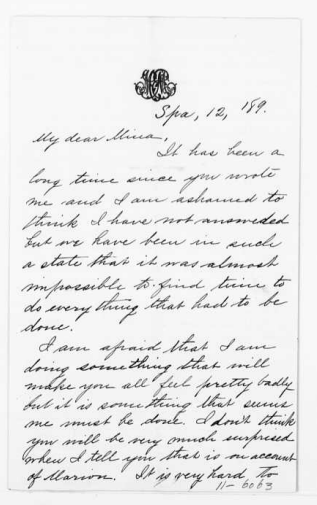
Family Records Series -- Correspondence

Alternative Title

Miller, Mary E. (1889)

Has Version

Archive.org Viewer, Microfilm Series Reel 161



Spa, 12, 89.

My dear Mina,

It has been a long time since you wrote me and I am ashamed to think I have not answered but we have been in such a state that it was almost impossible to find time to do every thing that had to be done.

I am afraid that I am doing something that will make you all feel pretty badly but it is something that seems me must be done. I don't think you will be very much surprised when I tell you that is on account of Marion. It is very hard to

11-6063

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[FP001A], Letter from Mary Emily Miller to Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.) Edison, June 12th, 1889

Title
[FP001A], Letter from Mary Emily Miller to Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.) Edison, June 12th, 1889

Editor's Notes
Supplied month

Author
Miller, Mary Emily

Recipient
Edison, Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.)

Mentioned

- Wellesley College
- Constans, Adele
- Earl, Elizabeth F
- Miller, Mary Valinda (Mrs Lewis)
- Brigham, Sarah W
- Edison, Marion Estelle
- Miller, Jane Eliza
- Miller, Grace A
- Edison, Thomas Alva
- Verity, George Herbert

Date
1889-06-12

Type
Letter

Subject

- Edison-Miller family
- Finances (TAE and family)
- Travel
- Education
- Health and medicine

Folder ID
FP001-F

Microfilm ID
161:992

Document ID
FP001A

URL
https://edisondigital.rutgers.edu/document/FP001A

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Timestamp
12 June 1889

Has Version
Archive.org Viewer, Microfilm Series Reel 161

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Spa, 12, 89.

My dear Mina,

It has been a long time since you wrote me and I am ashamed to think I have not answered but we have been in such a state that it was almost impossible to find time to do every thing that had to be done.

I am afraid that I am doing something that will make you all feel pretty badly but it is something that seems me must be done. I don't think you will be very much surprised when I tell you that is on account of Marion. It is very hard to

11-6063

write this but you and Mr. Edison will forgive me if I should ~~felt~~ come things a little strong for it is all done in the best intentions Marion confesses herself that she never liked me she told me so but she says that she thinks I made such a good hit in getting her over here that she will forgive me a great many things this summer, that she told Grace. Then while we were in Paris she did not like it if Jennie came up to see us, why, I don't know. She did not like it if Grace and I went down to the hotel to see them. In fact she wanted Jennie to be alone with her I see no other cause for her actions.

Several times we have asked her to do little things that would accommodate us, such now when we came to Spa, Mademoiselle had taken the apartments till the end of May and as the Doctor said that I should leave the twentieth of May for Spa, we wanted Marion to go to the apartment and stay with Grace and Mademoiselle till the end of the month and then join us, as neither Marion nor Grace wanted to leave Paris at that time. No, Marion would not do it she said she did not like "pensions" when you know at first she was to come directly to us at the apartments. This made me provoked but I said nothing we had to stay longer or pay for the apartment and have no use of it. well we stayed until the twenty seventh.

Then Marion wouldn't go to Spa No nothing would induce her to join us as you planned she should She took a lady (whom of course is very nice and whom Jennie got for her through Miss Earle) and stayed in Paris. This lady had no power to say that Marion should not do this or that but every thing Marion wanted to do the lady should do. Perhaps Marion

has been all night in Paris as to that
of course we can know nothing except
from one letter that she wrote where
she says she is having an elegant
time. I guess she is allright there
for Miss Brigham seemed to be a
very nice person although I can-
not judge having seen her only
once.

Well, Mina, since Grace has
decided to go to Wellesley next fall
she has to go to Paris to get things
arranged. We thought that if Miss
Brigham was willing she might
come and stay with me here at
Spa while Jennie and Grace join
Marion in Paris. Well how do you
suppose Marion answers. "She says
"she has no command over Miss B.
and even if Miss B. would join me
she (Marion) had made her plans
to go to London and she didn't
care to change them" that is just
the words she used and it has just
just the climax to all her other actions.
I don't think either you or Mr. Edison

would call upon Grace and my-
self to still hold out our invitations
to Marion to travel with us this
summer. In the first place, Marion
does not seem to want us around
she says she is in Europe and I
think that is all she cares, now,
the sooner we tell her that we
will not feel hurt if she does
not want to travel with us the more
she will be thankful that we release
her.

She says everything is changed
since we are not going to have
Mademoiselle for the summer
she now thinks that she is not
joining us any more and has no
obligations towards us.

Dear Mina, I am not very strong
and I think that it is almost im-
possible for me to risk having
Marion with us as I know we would
not agree as she says we never have

and I am not changed I am still the touchy Mary Miller that I used to be only more trouble makes me ill whereas before I could fight as well as any one. I could not stand the little annoyances that would naturally come up between us seeing we feel as we do. I do not excuse myself I know I am not a favorite with people and I do not blame Marion for not liking me but I do blame her for coming here saying she liked me and then find out she don't. You know I never disliked Marion she used to make me cross but that comes to everybody but she says she never did care for me so I think it would be better if plans were changed.

About Marion's staying here next year, Nina, I feel that I ought to tell you what I think. If you don't care to have her study but to go out then I think you could leave her here but if she were my child I should not

leave her so far away from home. She does not care a cent to study she would not learn french while in Paris so as not to speak english in the summer while we were traveling. You know this is what we expected when she came that she should learn french so as not to interrupt our studies but no, she would not do it. And she would not if she travelled with us this summer speak anything but english and you know Grace and I are trying to learn the language.

Miss Earl does not seem to me nor to Jennie to be the person for Marion. Of course perhaps you know her better since you make your plans by letter and have a clear understanding what is to be done. I think if Marion had finished her studies and was going to travel simply Miss Earl would be just the person but Nina you cannot imagine how people pet and flatter her and it is just spoiling her and I think Miss Earl would have very little say

and you and Mr. Edison living so far away you wouldn't have very little.

Jennie has not written you because she thought that you all would say it is Jennie, she always has some fault to find but Mina I think Jennie has been very very nice to Marion since here and Marion has done very little but find fault with her. Perhaps it makes no difference but I will tell what happened on the boat and you can judge for yourselves. There was a young man on the boat that paid Marion a great deal of attention Jennie did not think any thing about it till one day Marion was a sick and had to stay in her state room Jennie told her she would feel better upstairs but she thought not. Along in the afternoon a Mr. Smith came and told Jennie that this young man was in Marion's state

staterooms Jennie was very much astonished and went down to see and there Marion was dressing and the young man was waiting outside. Jennie gave him to understand she would take Marion upstairs as it seems it was the young man that asked her to get up and that he had been in her room several times that day. There were several who noticed how they acted and for that reason this Mr Smith and his wife took Jennie and Marion under their care and Mr. Smith told the young man he should leave Marion alone.

She has written you I suppose about London. Jennie telegraphed this morning that Marion must

not go to London without hearing from you but we all thought it best she should not go there because that Mr. Verity lives there and Mina, Marion is almost wild about him - After you gave her permission to send her card he wrote her a letter asking her to make a visit to his sister. Marion jumped up and was really wild for a minute of course Jennie said she could not accept such an invitation but she wrote back and found out that he would be in Paris Whitsuntide then she would not leave Paris and I don't know whether he went to Paris or not but now she wants to go to London — and as she doesn't care a snap for really seeing things I judge she goes to London for very different reasons.

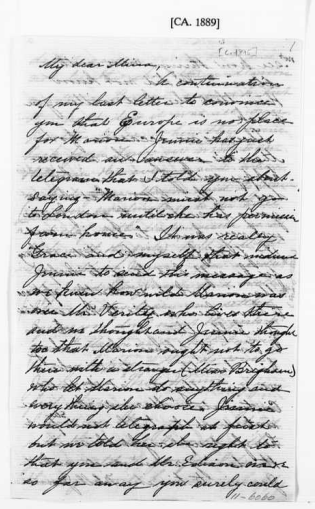
I think to you ought to know how she is spending her money When she came she was to get one dress for the summer and that for traveling would be a great

plenty will she got a dress but such a dress it is heliotrope silk deep hand embroidery around the bottom. It is a very pretty dress but not for what she wanted and after it was finished it didn't suit her so she bought another Jennie advised her about that dress but Marion would hear no advice Then she bought a blue foulard with large white stripe in it but when it was half done she found it hideous and said she wouldn't take it - Then her hats - she has bought three great, immense hats which she does not like — she would buy one, didn't like it so bought another. Of course Mina you may not thank me for telling you all this but I think that Marion is so far from you and you hear nothing of her except what she writes that perhaps if you knew how things really are with her you would change your plans for her next year and take her home. Why! Marion herself says that Europe is not the place for her yet. She will never study

here in the world and that is what she and you say she wants to do.

Mina, when you come you can see for yourselves how things are but I thought to wait till you come you would have settled all plans with Miss Earl and I really think Hope is not the place yet for a young girl of Marion's disposition I have no ill will toward Marion as Mr. Edison may think but this goes to you in the best of intentions!

Well, dear Mina, you must be tired reading such a letter I wish I could tell you something a little more cheering now. But Spa is such a quiet place, as yet that there is nothing to tell. Perhaps Anna Barber and her Mother will come to Spa I hope they will for I am getting kind of tired of the place but the doctor says he wants to keep me two or three weeks longer than was expected. Give my love to all. Did you enjoy Mamma's visit? and did the little Hunts go off nicely? Why didn't you write to me? I suppose you were busy packing



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[FP001AA], Letter from Mary Emily Miller to Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.) Edison, June 1889

Title
[FP001AA], Letter from Mary Emily Miller to Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.) Edison, June 1889

Editor's Notes
Supplied year and month

Author
Miller, Mary Emily

Recipient
Edison, Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.)

Mentioned

- Brigham, Sarah W
- Edison, Marion Estelle
- Miller, Jane Eliza
- Miller, Grace A
- Edison, Thomas Alva
- Verity, George Herbert

Date
1889-06-00

Type
Letter

Subject

- Edison-Miller family
- Travel

Folder ID
FP001-F

Microfilm ID
161:999

Document ID
FP001AA

URL
https://edisondigital.rutgers.edu/document/FP001AA

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Timestamp
1 June 1889

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[C. 1889]

My dear Alma,

In continuation of my last letter to convince you that Europe is no place for Marion. Jennie has just received an answer to that telegram that I told you about saying - "Marion must not go to London until she has formed some home." It was really Grace and myself that induced Jennie to send this message as we knew how much Marion was in Mr. Variety who lives there and we thought and Jennie thought too that Marion ought not to go there with a stranger (Miss Brigham) who let Marion do anything and every thing she chose. Jennie would not telegraph at first but we told her she might to that you and Mr. Edison were so far away you surely could

11-6060

not see how things were with Marion. We did not know then that she had written you to ask.

There is no occasion for Marion's saying she was unhappy with Jennie as she does in this letter that I am going to enclose to you. Jennie was very kind to Marion and the first few weeks did nothing for herself but tried to help Marion (which evidently appears to have been a task to her) and of a help. Then Jennie went to Town to please her. They had trouble one time when we were altogether at the Hotel Continental. Marion's shoe came untied at the table and she put her foot up right there in the dining room and asked Jennie to tie it. Well Jennie

didn't say a word but did not tie the shoe then. Marion made a horrid row about it but the next day it was all over. Another time when they came back from Town we went to see them in the evening and when we had gone Marion said to Jennie (we were expecting to go to the hotel and play with Mademoiselle as we to be with the girls) "Well if Helle come, shut Jennie, you needn't play" and then Jennie said "well I have to stay to see you settled I guess you don't want the girls to come." Marion said "Well I won't be very happy if they do come." Jennie said "Well, Marion, if you feel that way towards the girls I don't see how you can travel with them and I would rather you wouldn't go for I don't think you will have a very happy

tance." This is all the trouble there has been and they were trifles and passed over but I suppose Marion has not forgotten that although I tried my best to convince her that we wanted her as we did at the time. She writes this letter as though we had treated her terribly and I am sure we have not as we had no unkind feeling[s] formed[?] ^

I will also enclose the letter that Jennie wrote in explanation of her telegram to Marion and you can easily see that Jennie was right.

We parted with the very best feeling Marion gave Jennie a lovely lunch of flowers and every thing was nice. She must have talked you about her England trip for Saturday after we left under Miss Brigham's influence for Miss Brigham also wrote a very funny letter to Jennie which Jennie tore up or I would send you that also and you could see Miss B. is not the person for Marion. Miss Earl writes and says: Miss B. feels obliged to do everything Miss Edison asks of her" so you see there is no restraint.

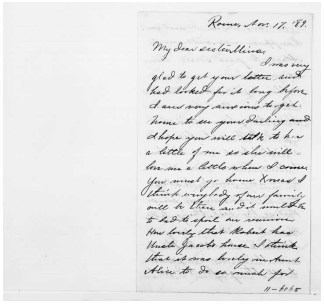
Well I don't know as there is much use to tell you more if you do not now look at it as we do then more words would be useless. I hope if you feel otherwise, that we are not doing right you will overlook it for we are doing what seems to us to be best and not from ugliness towards Marion.

With love to you and Mr. Edison and the children I am -

Your loving sister.

Mary E. Miller

*. After that night Jennie payed her own expenses but still did the same for Marion as before.



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[FP001AAA], Letter from Mary Emily Miller to Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.) Edison, November 17th, 1889

Title

[FP001AAA], Letter from Mary Emily Miller to Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.) Edison, November 17th, 1889

Editor's Notes

11-6065. [Rome] I was very glad to get your letter and had looked for it long before. I am very anxious to get home to see your darling and I hope you will talk to her a little of me so she will love me a little when I come. You must go home Xmas. I think everybody your family will be there and it would be to bad to spoil our reunion. How lovly that Robert has Uncle Jacob's house. I think that it was lovely in Aunt Alice to do so much for Robert and Louise, do not you! I suppose you will invite Alice to pass some time at your home now. ## Mina, you ask me about Marion, well I have seen Miss Brigham and had a good talk with her and she thinks it will be best to leave Marion here. Marion wants very much to stay and I think myself that that is the best thing to do. BUT I would SURELY give to MRS EARL all authority over Marion in regards to all things for I do not think, nor does Miss Brigham, that Marion knows the best thing to do for herself nor does she always do the right thing–So if I were you I should have Miss Earle fully understand that her word is to be law with Marion and I then think Mina that Marion will improve and I will be more contented in everything. I have so much to tell you on this subject but it is always hard to write–I think Miss Brigham does her best for Marion and is very conscious about her work but she says Marion is not interested in what she sees and does not appreciate it in the least. She is anxious for the time when they settle down. Marion feels sadly to think you do not write to her often and Mina, I would write to her often for I am sure your letters and your advice have more might than you or any of us think with Marion. She seemed much pleased when I told her of the opera glasses although they have not put in an appearance. It seems she has not given her address at the bank in Paris since she left so the glasses must be still there. ## Alice has not written me as you thought she would. It was probably a little thing and she forgot about it before she finished asking you my address. ## I have any amount of messages to you from Marion and Miss Brigham, but I will save those for you to tell when I get home. ## I don't worry about my room, Mina, it will be very pretty I am sure,m because Mamma and Papa have done it for me. I will be perfectly contented with it no matter how it is.– ## Remember me to Miss William and give my love to all the family. I am sorry that Mademoiselle does not enjoy it at your home but I think her very discourtious to show it--Remember me to her and tell her she has no mind in me as far as Mr. Hammer is concerned. I suppose Marion told her star to make her forget Mr. H--knowing that she like him so much and that he does not come for her. Alice too must not be forgotten. I hope she is happy and

teaches that dear little babe good French–How cunning the baby must be. I am very anxious to see her and you all–Your loving sister, ## Mary

Author
Miller, Mary Emily

Recipient
Edison, Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.)

Mentioned

- Miller, Lewis
- Miller, Jacob
- Earl, Elizabeth F
- Miller, Robert Anderson
- Edison, Madeleine
- Miller, Mary Valinda (Mrs Lewis)
- Brigham, Sarah W
- Edison, Marion Estelle
- Miller, Alice Newton (Mrs Jacob)

Date
1889-11-17

Type
Letter

Subject

- Edison-Miller family
- Travel
- Education

Folder ID
FP001-F

Microfilm ID
161:983

Document ID
FP001AAA

URL
https://edisondigital.rutgers.edu/document/FP001AAA

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Timestamp
17 November 1889

Has Version
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Rome, Nov. 17, '89.

My dear sister Alice.

I was very glad to get your letter and had looked for it long before. I am very anxious to get home to see your darling and I hope you will talk to her a little of me so she will love me a little when I come. You must go home Xmas I think everybody of our family will be there and it would be too bad to spoil our reunion. How lovely that Robert has Uncle Jacob's house I think that it was lovely in Aunt Alice to do so much for

11-6065

Robert and Louise do not you? I suppose you will invite Alice to pass some time at your home now.

Mina you ask me about Marion, well I have seen Miss Brigham and had a good talk with her and she thinks it will be best to leave Marion here. Marion wants very much to stay and I think myself that that is the best thing to do. But I would surely give to Mrs Earl all authority over Marion in regards to all things for I do not

think, nor does Miss Brigham that Marion knows the best thing to do for herself nor does she always do the right thing - So if I was you I should have Miss Earle fully understand that her word is to be law with Marion and I then think Mina that Marion will improve and will be more contented in everything. I have so much to tell you on this subject but it is always hard to write - I think Miss Brigham does her best for Marion and is

very conscientious about her work but she says Marion is not interested in what she sees and does not appreciate it in the least. She is anxious for the time when they settle down. Marion feels badly to think you do not write to her often and Alice should write to her often for I am sure your letters and your advices have more weight than you or any of us think with Marion. She seemed very much pleased when

I told her of the opera glasses although they have not put in an appearance. It seems she has not given her address at the bank in Paris since she left so the glasses must be still there.

Aline has not written me as you thought she would. It was probably a little thing and she forgot about it before she finished asking you my address.

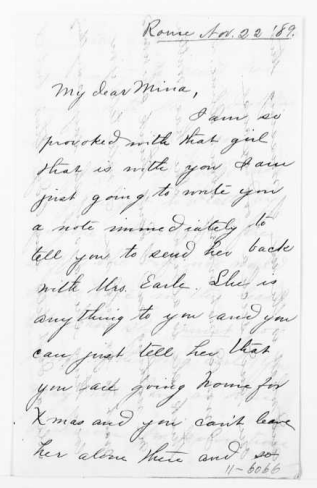
I have any amount of messages to you from

Marion and Miss Brigham but I will save those for you to tell when I get home.

I don't worry about my room, Aline, it will be very pretty I am sure because Mamma and Papa have done it for me I will be perfectly contented with it no matter how it is. —

Remember me to Miss Williams and give my love to all the family. I am sorry that Mad[emoisel]le does not enjoy it at your home but I think her very

discourteous to show it — Remember me to her and tell her she has no rival in me as far as Mr. Hammer is concerned I suppose Marion told her that to make her forget Mr. H— knowing that she liked him so much and that he does not care for her. Aline too must not be forgotten. I hope she is happy and tell[s] that dear little babe good fr[ie]nds — How cunning the baby must be I am very anxious to see her and you all — Your loving sister Mary —


Rome Nov. 22 '89
My dear Mina,
I am so
provoked with that girl
that is with you I am
just going to write you
a note immediately to
tell you to send her back
with Mrs. Earle. She is
any thing to you and you
can just tell her that
you said going home for
X mas and you can't leave
her alone there and so
11-6066

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[FP001AAB], Letter from Mary Emily Miller to Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.) Edison, November 22nd, 1889

Title

[FP001AAB], Letter from Mary Emily Miller to Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.) Edison, November 22nd, 1889

Editor's Notes

11-6066. [Rome] I am so provoked with that girl that is with you. I am just going to write you a note immediately to tell you to send her back with Mrs. Earle. She is anything to you and you can just tell her that you are going home for Xmas and you can't leave her there and so you take advantage of this opportunity to send her home with the lady that is to be with your daughter. I would not be played to death by anyone who invited herself as she did not would I hesitate in the least to tell her she MUST go home with Mrs. Earl. You may not have an other occasion for some time, and what is the use of missing this one and such a good excuse. I would not worry about Alice. I think she is alright. She has written me nothing and I don't think she sould want to go with me. I will tell you everything she says if she says anything. Mina, don't tell anybody this but I do so want to tell you and since you tell me everything I think you will let me tell you. I want Mademoiselle to go home with me to stay I mean, she loves me really Mina and I love her and she will come for forty a month and be a companion for me and teach the little boys french or german. Do you think it will be absolutely impossible? It is lovely of you to ask her to go to your house when we arrive and she appreciates your kindness, and you will probably see our two happy faces (for we are happy) presented at your day the 22nd or 23rd. Melle thinks that it is very kind of you and that she would love to go to you. Marion was here and has left now for Milan, etc. She seems very anxious for the time to come to settle down with Mrs. Earl. She gave me lots of messages for you and her Papa, which I will tell you upon arriving-- Now goodbye. Do not worry about things and be sure to send Melle home with Mrs. Earl whether she wants to or not. Don't miss that chance. Think a little about my plan with Melle and they can give me that as a Xmas present. I shall be as happy as a lark at home. Mina don''t worry, I am too glad to get there and if I were sure Melle C would have a pleasant Xmas nothing would mar my home coming. But don't for the world tell anyone. I tell it you in confidence and such it must be not even THOMAS ALVA must know he makes TOO MUCH FUN OF ME. Write heaps of love–I got the BEADS blessed by the POPE. Mary E. Miller

Author

Miller, Mary Emily

Recipient

Edison, Mina Miller (Mrs Thomas A.)

Mentioned

- Constans, Adele
- Earl, Elizabeth F
- Edison, Marion Estelle
- Edison, Thomas Alva

Date
1889-11-22

Type
Letter

Subject

- Edison-Miller family
- TAE personality and character
- Travel
- Education

Folder ID
FP001-F

Microfilm ID
161:987

Document ID
FP001AAB

URL
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22 November 1889

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Rome Nov. 22 '89.

My dear Mina,

I am so provoked with that girl that is with you I am just going to write you a note immediately to tell you to send her back with Mrs. Earle. She is anything to you and you can just tell her that you are going home for Xmas and you can't leave her alone there and so

11-6066

and what is the use of missing this one, and such a good excuse.
I would not worry about Aline. I think she is allright. She has written me nothing and I don't think she would want to go with me. I will tell you every thing she says if she says anything Mina don't tell anybody this but I

one like a Spanish Nobleman. I feel sure I am to receive a letter from Tonia inside the week telling that it is to be quite quiet. I would not disappoint Tonia to accept for anyone who cared for me as I did not wish to see Tonia or the Count to tell the news myself. Tonia write me a letter to tell me all about Bernard. Good Tonia write Miss Carl you may rest sure am other Accordion for dance time

Do so want to tell you and since you tell me everything I think you will let me tell you. I want Mademoiselle to go home with me to stay I mean, she love me really Alma and I love her and she will come for forty a month and be a companion for me and teach the (little) boys French or german. Do you think it will be absolutely impossible? It is lonely if you

to ask her to go to your house when we arrive and she appreciates your kindness. and you will probably see our two happy faces (for we are happy) presented at your day the 22nd or 23rd. Mlle thinks that it is very kind of you and that she would love to go to you.

Marion was here and has left now for Milan etc. She seems very anxious for the time to come to settle down with Mrs. Earl.

11 – 6066

She gave me lots of messages for you and her Papa which I will tell you upon arriving—

Now good bye. Do not worry about things and be sure to send Mlle home with Mlle Earl whether she wants to or not. Don't miss that chance. Think a little about my plan with Mlle C. and they can give me that as a Xmas present. I shall be as happy as a lark at

Fortune's Minion. Don't worry. Dame Love gladly to get there and give you more than Mlle C. would have a pleasant Xmas notwithstanding. Any home coming. Don't forget the invalid. Tell me anyone. Write it to me confidence and excuse it must be short even Thomas Adam must know he makes too much fuss of me.

Write Keeper of Love - Agent Love

heads blessed by the Holy Mary E. Miller